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Attorney General Eliot L. Spitzer

# Attorney General **Eliot Spitzer** addresses NYC luncheon

One of UB Law School's most active alumni chapters gathered old friends and new on Jan. 26 for the 2001 New York Alumni Luncheon. Scheduled to coincide with the New York State Bar Association's annual meeting, the luncheon was held at the Union League Club and featured an address by Eliot L. Spitzer, New York State attorney general.

Spitzer, whose tenure as attorney general has been marked by such high-profile cases as the national tobacco settlement and a lawsuit against the owners of 17 Midwestern coal-fired power plants for their role in New York's acid rain problem, spoke on a theme he returns to time and again: "The New Federalism."

The attorney general argues that we are seeing a swing toward a re-emphasis of the states' powers within the federal structure. "The states are assuming the principal role of designing and administering a variety of social programs, as well as health and social services, that previously were performed at the national level," Spitzer has said.

The state's Department of Law – "a law firm with 600 partners" – has taken an activist role in dozens of cases. "We are seeking to unleash the positive, creative energy at the state level in the face of the inaction or legal inability of the federal government to act," Spitzer has said. "And in so doing, we are testing the capacity of the state courts to respond and adapt the law to changing human conditions."

Also addressing the luncheon were Dean Nils Olsen and Law Alumni Association President Patrick C. O'Reilly. Hon. Joseph G. Makowski, a justice of the New York State Supreme Court, Eighth Judicial District, arranged for Spitzer's appearance.



Marline O'Connor and Edward O'Connor '56



Marilyn Faulkner '82



Left to right, Phillip Brothman '62, Professor Kenneth F. Joyce and Peter R. Engelhardt '72